(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and by when a decision is likely to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) and (b) The Department of Industrial Development (DID) has been merged with Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP).

FDI in Tea Plantations

5208. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a proposal for simplifying conditions for foreign companies to invest in tea plantations and raising the limit of FDI to 74 per cent;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor; and

(c) what is the expected impact of this move on the fate of domestic tea industry which is facing competition and challenges all round?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A proposal to allow 74% Foreign Direct Investment in tea industry is under consideration of the Government.

(c) The Foreign Direct Investment may provide the tea industry with the much required capital for replanting, new planting etc. and technology for upgrading and modernising the production and packaging processes etc.

Protecting the Interests of Tobacco Farmers

5209. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have protected tobacco farmers' interests regarding the proposed restrictions against tobacco;

(b) whether Government have sent their representative to various Expert Committee meetings on the subject;

(c) whether it is a fact that Government and the Tobacco Board have been less than alert on this matter;

(d) what steps are proposed to ensure that tobacco farmers are not harmed by hasty legislation;

(e) whether any alternate steps of funding tobacco farmers have been worked out; and

(f) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (f) In the absence of any indication on the source or nature of restrictions, the purpose of the Expert Committee and the direction of the proposed legislation, the question of Government and Tobacco Board being less than alert in protecting the interests of tobacco farmers against any hasty legislation and funding of the tobacco growers, does not arise.

Losses caused to US Motion Picture Industry

5210. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the US Government has found faults with India's Intellectual Property Protection Regime, especially its enforcement in the context of alleged losses caused to the US Motion Picture Industry due to audio visual piracy;

(b) if so, the details of the US protest and criticism, indicating and annual losses alleged to have been caused to the US industry; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to the National Trade Estimate (NTE) 2000 Report by the United States Trade Representative (USTR) audio visual piracy allegedly continues to be a significant problem in India. This Report has also alleged that US industry representatives estimate annual losses to the US Motion Picture Industry due to audio visual piracy to be US $66 million.

(c) India's copyright law fully provides for adequate administrative, civil and criminal procedures and remedies for enforcement of copyrights and is fully compatible with India's multilateral obligations under the WTO agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights.